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March 29 1956

In reply refer to
NEA:NE

Dear Mr. Duce:

Thank you for sending me the full translation of the interview in Cairo with Sheikh Yusuf. We appreciate, always, receiving information of this kind on matters in the area.

Sincerely yours,

William M. Rountree
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Near Eastern, South Asian
and African Affairs

Mr. James T. Duce,
Vice President,
Arabian American Oil Company,
Shoreham Building,
Washington, D. C.

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Mr. William M. Roundtree,
Deputy Assistant Secretary of State,
Department of State,
Room 3022,
21st & Virginia Ave., N. W.
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Roundtree:

I am sending you herewith a translation made by
Mr. George Rentz of an interview with Sheikh Yusuf Yassin,
speaking for the King, in Cairo on March 16.

He was speaking with the Egyptian public in mind
when he said in answer to the question about Saudi Arab policy
towards the U. S. - "it is a policy of friendship and cordiality
and cooperation".

You will also be interested in his remarks on the
Buraimi question.

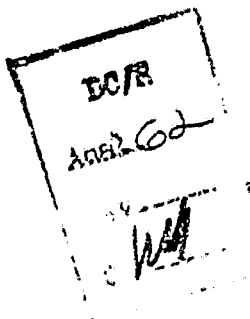
Very truly yours,

James Terry Duce
James Terry Duce.

Enclosure
cc: Fraser Wilkens

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At the Saudi Deputy Foreign Minister's Press Conference

KING SAUD SAYS: THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE HAS GIVEN THE TRUEST EXPRESSION OF OUR POLITICAL PROGRAM

IT IS NO LONGER POSSIBLE FOR COLONIALISM TO ENDURE IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD

His Majesty King Saud has received many indications of the desire of newspaper men that His Majesty should discuss the subjects which concern Arab public opinion. His Majesty delegated Shaikh Yusuf Yasin to meet them in a large conference. Shaikh Yusuf stated that His Majesty King Saud's policy in the present circumstances had been set forth in the statement of the three Chiefs (King Saud, President Quwwatli, and Prime Minister Abd al-Nasir). This policy is based on a desire for peace and the protection of the full and undiminished rights of the Arabs in all of their lands. His Majesty shares the world's concern that its peoples should secure their established rights, and he believes that it is not possible that colonialism should continue to exist in any part of the world.

Shaikh Yusuf Yasin, the Saudi Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of State, held a press conference in the Palace of the Republic in Qubba (in Cairo) at eight o'clock last evening (Thursday, 15 March 1956), which was attended by representatives of the Arab press and foreign news agencies and newspapers and radio correspondents.

Shaikh Yusuf began the conference by saying: "I greet you as an old colleague of yours, as I practiced the profession of journalism for a long time. His Majesty King Saud has received from representatives of the press numerous requests for a discussion of some of the topics which are connected with the present international situation and which are occupying the thoughts of the Arab people. It pleases me to bring to you His Majesty's greetings and his appreciation of your journalistic efforts and of the difficulties you have to go through in order to enlighten public opinion. In view of His Majesty's pre-occupations it is not possible for him to hold a personal discussion with you."

The Tripartite Statement

Shaikh Yusuf continued: "The fact is that there is nothing new with respect to His Majesty's policy which might be discussed with you, as his policy at the present time has been set forth in the Tripartite statement which the three Chiefs of the Arabs signed. That statement and what it includes in the way of plans and decisions gives the truest expression of the policy which His Majesty is pursuing in the Arab causes and towards foreign states. It is a policy based on a desire for peace and the protection of the full and undiminished rights of the Arabs in all their lands."

The Dhahran Airport

Shaikh Yusuf was asked: "Is it possible to speak about the policy of Saudi Arabia towards America with respect to the renewal of the Dhahran agreement?"

He said it is a policy of friendship and cordiality and cooperation. Negotiations will begin shortly with respect to the Dhahran Airport, and it is likely that these negotiations will take place in Saudi Arabia.

Wisdom and Spirited Feeling

Shaikh Yusuf was asked: "Do you wish to make any reference to what the statement contains with respect to the dispute about the Buraimi region?" He said: "The fact is that Buraimi is considered to be a case of greatest importance. It is one of the most essential cases with which His Majesty and his Government are concerned. We are confident of our rights in Buraimi, and we hope to arrive at a solution of this problem through negotiations and peaceful means, as the problem of Buraimi and the disputed areas occupies the thoughts of every Saudi throughout the Kingdom. His Majesty has been following a course of wisdom in preventing any movement that is not peaceful in this region in view of the wave of spirited feeling which is surging through the breasts of all of the Saudi citizens. He is doing this in the hope of arriving at a solution of the problem by friendly methods."

Desire for Peace

Shaikh Yusuf added: "Discussions are going on for the carrying on of negotiations between Saudi Arabia and Britain looking towards an investigation of a method whereby a solution of this dispute might be arrived at. His Majesty and his Government welcome any peaceful solution and a return to the old friendship with Britain. We hope that we shall secure some result in this matter."

The Problems of North Africa

Shaikh Yusuf was asked whether the meeting of King Saud with the French Foreign Minister was helpful in furthering the Saudi Government's understanding of French policy in North Africa. He said that His Majesty understood the French viewpoint in this case, and His Majesty had brought the French Foreign Minister to understand his viewpoint in this problem, where the peoples of North Africa are linked to His Majesty by the ties of religion and Arabism. They are demanding no more than their rights in life. on the basis that the Arab West is a part of the great Arab homeland, and it is the right of this West to secure its freedom and to live a life of dignity. His Majesty shares the world's concern that its peoples should secure their established rights which God designed for them. It is not possible for colonialism to continue to exist in any part of the world.

The Most Horrible Event in the History of Mankind

Shaikh Yusuf was asked about the Fatwa (judicial opinion) issued in Cairo which provides that any Moslem cooperating with Israel is to be considered an infidel, and whether this is to be regarded as the view of the Saudi Arab Government. He replied: "I believe that the opinion of the Arab nation and its

leaders, in whose forefront is His Majesty King Saud, is well known and does not require clarification. Palestine is Arab and has been inhabited by Arabs since ancient times. The Jews did not have a state there. The oppression inflicted by Zionism upon the people of Palestine is to be reckoned among the unique events in the history of mankind. The crimes committed against the Arabs are among the most horrible crimes in the history of mankind. The opinion of the Chiefs of the Arabs with respect to the Palestine case can be discovered by referring to the historic joint statement."

Cairo and Riyadh are the Same

The Saudi Minister was asked whether he expected that His Majesty King Saud would prolong his stay in Egypt. He said: "It is possible that he may do so. In any event, Cairo is regarded as His Majesty's home, just as Riyadh is his home."

The Meeting of the Kings of Iraq and Jordan

The last question discussed with the Saudi Minister was whether Saudi Arabia had information about the meeting of the Kings of Iraq and Jordan and what its view was with respect to King Husain's call for a meeting of the Arab heads of state. He said: "Our information on this subject is what we have heard from the news. As for His Majesty's opinion with respect to a meeting of the heads of state, he welcomes every effort which may lead to agreement among the Arabs."

al-Ahram (Cairo) 16 March 1956 pp. 6 & 13

Translated: GSR

Typed: MAM